What is claimed is:

1.   A method for encouraging users of a computer network to access dynamic pricing information on the computer network, the method comprising:

distributing to one or more users of the computer network a modular computer program that displays dynamic pricing information collected from the computer network; and

presenting to the one or more users of the modular computer program an interactive visual indication of a user-attractive resource available on the computer network.

2.   The method of claim 1 wherein the modular computer program comprises a Java-based applet.

3.   The method of claim 1 further comprising collecting dynamic pricing information from the computer network.

4.   The method of claim 1 wherein the computer network comprises the Internet.

5.   The method of claim 1 wherein the computer network comprises a virtual private network.

6.   The method of claim 1 wherein distributing the modular computer program comprises pushing a copy of the modular computer program to one or more users of the computer network.

7.   The method of claim 1 wherein distributing the modular computer program comprises enabling users of the computer network to pull a copy of the modular computer program.

8.   The method of claim 1 wherein distributing the modular computer program comprises sending the modular computer program to a user of the computer network through an electronic mail system.

9.   The method of claim 1 wherein distributing the modular computer program comprises sending the modular computer program to a user of the computer network through an instant messaging system.

10.   The method of claim 1 further comprising causing the modular computer program to display a stream of dynamic pricing information collected from the computer network.

11.   The method of claim 10 wherein the stream of dynamic pricing information that is displayed varies based on user input.

1   12.   The method of claim 11 wherein the stream of dynamic pricing information
2   has a predefined taxonomy, and wherein the user can selectively view different levels of the
3   taxonomy.

1   13.   The method of claim 1 wherein the interactive visual indication comprises a
2   glyph.

1   14.   The method of claim 1 wherein the interactive visual indication comprises an
2   interactive link to the user-attractive resource.

1   15.   The method of claim 14 wherein the interactive link comprises a uniform
2   resource locator (URL) tag.

1   16.   The method of claim 1 wherein the user-attractive resource comprises a
2   contest.

1   17.   The method of claim 1 wherein the user-attractive resource comprises a
2   reward program.

1   18.   The method of claim 1 wherein the user-attractive resource comprises a
2   coupon.

1   19.   The method of claim 1 wherein the user-attractive resource comprises an
2   advertisement.

1   20.   The method of claim 1 wherein the user-attractive resource comprises a multi-
2   media presentation.

1   21.   The method of claim 1 further comprising providing a user with access to the
2   user-attractive resource upon sensing that the user selected the interactive visual indication.

1   22.   The method of claim 1 wherein the modular computer program displays
2   dynamic pricing information in a ticker display format.

1   23.   The method of claim 1 wherein a plurality of instances of the modular
2   computer program are presented to a user concurrently.

1   24.   The method of claim 23 wherein each of the plurality of instances of the
2   modular computer program includes one or more associated visual indications of a user-
3   attractive resource available on the computer network.

25. The method of claim 24 wherein each of the one or more visual indications can be the same as or different from the visual indications on other instances of the modular computer program.

26. The method of claim 24 wherein each of the one or more visual indications can correspond to the same or different user-attractive resources as the visual indications on other instances of the modular computer program.

27. A system for encouraging users of a computer network to access dynamic pricing information on the computer network, the system comprising:

a source of dynamic pricing information;

a modular computer program comprising instructions to perform the following operations:

receive dynamic pricing information from the dynamic pricing information source;

display the received dynamic pricing information to a user of the modular computer program; and

present to the user of the modular computer program an interactive visual indication of a user-attractive resource available on the computer network.

28. The system of claim 27 wherein the modular computer program comprises a Java-based applet.

29. The system of claim 27 wherein the modular computer program further comprises instructions to receive dynamic pricing information from the computer network.

30. The system of claim 27 wherein the computer network comprises the Internet.

31. The system of claim 27 wherein the computer network comprises a virtual private network.

32. The system of claim 27 wherein the dynamic pricing information that is displayed to the user varies based on user input.

33. The system of claim 32 wherein the dynamic pricing information has a predefined taxonomy, and wherein the modular computer program further comprises instructions to allow a user to selectively view different levels of the taxonomy.

34. The system of claim 27 wherein the interactive visual indication comprises a glyph.

35. The system of claim 27 wherein the interactive visual indication comprises an interactive link to the user-attractive resource.

36. The system of claim 34 wherein the interactive link comprises a uniform resource locator (URL) tag.

37. The system of claim 27 wherein the user-attractive resource comprises a contest.

38. The system of claim 27 wherein the user-attractive resource comprises a reward program.

39. The system of claim 27 wherein the user-attractive resource comprises a coupon.

40. The system of claim 27 wherein the user-attractive resource comprises an advertisement.

41. The system of claim 27 wherein the user-attractive resource comprises a multi-media presentation.

42. The system of claim 27 wherein the modular computer program further comprises instructions to provide a user with access to the user-attractive resource upon sensing that the user selected the interactive visual indication.

43. The system of claim 27 wherein the modular computer program displays dynamic pricing information in a ticker display format.

44. The system of claim 27 wherein a plurality of instances of the modular computer program are presented to a user concurrently.

45. The system of claim 43 wherein each of the plurality of instances of the modular computer program includes one or more associated visual indications of a user-attractive resource available on the computer network.

46. The system of claim 44 wherein each of the one or more visual indications can be the same as or different from the visual indications on other instances of the modular computer program.

47.   The system of claim 44 wherein each of the one or more visual indications can correspond to the same or different user-attractive resources as the visual indications on other instances of the modular computer program.

48.   A method for encouraging users of a computer network to access a dynamic pricing system, the method comprising presenting a user-interface abstraction that displays dynamic pricing information collected from the computer network and displays an interactive visual indication of a user-attractive resource available on the computer network.

49.   Computer software, embodied in a tangible medium and/or in a propagated carrier signal, for encouraging users of a computer network to access a dynamic pricing system, the software comprising instructions to cause a computer system to present a user-interface abstraction that displays dynamic pricing information collected from the computer network and displays an interactive visual indication of a user-attractive resource available on the computer network.

50.   The software of claim 48 wherein the instructions are embodied as a Java-based applet.

51.   The software of claim 48 further comprising instructions for receiving dynamic pricing information from the computer network.

52.   The software of claim 48 wherein the computer network comprises the Internet.

53.   The software of claim 48 wherein the computer network comprises a virtual private network.

54.   The software of claim 48 wherein the dynamic pricing information that is displayed varies based on user input.

55.   The software of claim 48 wherein the dynamic pricing information has a predefined taxonomy, and wherein the software further comprises instructions to allow a user to selectively view different levels of the taxonomy.

56.   The software of claim 48 wherein the interactive visual indication comprises a glyph.

57.   The software of claim 48 wherein the interactive visual indication comprises an interactive link to the user-attractive resource.

1   58.   The software of claim 56 wherein the interactive link comprises a uniform

2   resource locator (URL) tag.

1   59.   The software of claim 48 wherein the user-attractive resource comprises a

2   contest.

1   60.   The software of claim 48 wherein the user-attractive resource comprises a

2   reward program.

1   61.   The software of claim 48 wherein the user-attractive resource comprises a

2   coupon.

1   62.   The software of claim 48 wherein the user-attractive resource comprises an

2   advertisement.

1   63.   The software of claim 48 wherein the user-attractive resource comprises a

2   multi-media presentation.

1   64.   The software of claim 48 further comprising instructions for providing a user

2   with access to the user-attractive resource upon sensing that the user selected the interactive

3   visual indication.

1   65.   The software of claim 48 wherein the dynamic pricing information is

2   displayed in a ticker display format.

1   66.   The software of claim 48 wherein a plurality of instances of the software can

2   execute concurrently.